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Identification of a receptor for BLyS demonstrates a crucial role in humoral immunity.

Yan M, Marsters SA, Grewal IS, Wang H, Ashkenazi A, Dixit VM.

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B lymphocyte stimulator (BLyS) is a member of the tumor necrosis factor (TNF) superfamily. BLyS stimulates proliferation of, and immunoglobulin production by, B cells. However, the relative importance of BLyS in physiological B cell activation is unclear. We identified a B cell receptor for BLyS through expression cloning as TACI, an orphan TNF receptor homologue of unknown function. Binding of BLyS to TACI activated signaling by nuclear factor-kappa B (NF-kappa B). In vitro soluble TACI-Fc fusion protein blocked BLyS-induced NF-kappa B activation in B lymphoma cells and IgM production in peripheral blood B cells. In vivo treatment of immunized mice with TACI-Fc inhibited production of antigen-specific IgM and IgG1 antibodies and abolished splenic germinal center (GC) formation. Thus, BLyS activity must play a critical role in the humoral immune response.

PMID: 10881172 [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE]

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